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Financial Vision

Jean-Pierre Diserens is championing the role of investment advisors in the global economy.

BY JUSTIN DOEBELE

Last September, the Indonesia Opera Society held a gala dinner and performance for its tenth anniversary celebration at the Dharmawangsa hotel in Jakarta. The event was attended by 600 VIPs from Jakarta social, political and business communities, as well as opera singers who had flown in from 10 countries to perform for the assembled guests.

Many of those attending may not have recognized a connection between three of the four largest partners supporting the event: Fidurhone S.A., a Swiss multi-family office; the Convention of Independent Financial Advisor (CIFA), a NGO for investment advisors; and the Swiss Vil-

lage, a local Indonesian organization. The final partner was TBM, an airplane firm.

What's surprising is that those three firms had one man in common: Swiss citizen Jean-Pierre Diserens, 65, who had arrived from Geneva to attend the event. Jean-Pierre clearly enjoys wearing many hats. For his day job, he is the founder and chief executive of Fidurhone S.A.

As such, he is a true pioneer in the elite world of Swiss private banking, because his firm was the first multi-family office in Geneva, established in 1976. "Back then, we didn't even have the name [multi-family office] for what we did," he says. "However, demand has increased globally." (Multi-family offices, as the name implies, work exclusively with high net worth families to manage their assets and investments.)

However, he is more than a just a financial investment advisor. He is also has a role in the nexus of the global economy, financial services and in-

ternational policies, in his position as the secretary general and one of the founding members of CIFA. This NGO was started in 2001 with a mission to strengthen the role of independent financial advisors (IFAs) at the international level, in order to better represent the interests of investors. Also headquartered in Geneva, CIFA's members include 40 national IFA associations in 24 countries around the globe, whose combined membership is about 300,000 financial advisors. In Indonesia, the CIFA has two partner organizations, the Financial Planner Association Indonesia (FPAI) and Financial Planning Standards Board (FPSB).

While the financial services industry has many trade bodies, the CIFA stands out as more than just another as-

"PEOPLE NEED HELP TO PROTECT THE SAFETY OF THEIR ASSETS."

sociation. It has the rare privilege of having general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, a status it received in 2015. "That is the highest status you can have. Only 137 NGOs out of the thousands around the world have that status," says Jean-Pierre. "We are also the only one with that status from the financial intermediation sector." As such, Jean-Pierre works closely with several UN agencies, and he was also invited to speak at a UN-related event in Bali in 2014 in front of 5,000 attendees.

Finally, Jean-Pierre is connected to the Swiss Village, based in Jakarta, as its founders Selim Chanderli and Indira Tasan are personal friends. In addition, Swiss Village works closely with CIFA partners FPAI and FBSB. The organization seeks to be a bridge between Indonesia and the Swiss financial community, as well as providing its own consulting, translation, public relations and communications services, and being the representative office for Forward SA from Lausanne, a group dedicated to promoting exchanges in Indonesia and Switzerland in the financial field.

While joining with the opera event had some commercial motivation—to prospect for new clients and build on existing relations, Jean-Pierre is also here to investigate and support Indonesia's rising profile in the global economy. Indonesia's growing economy means there are more wealthy individuals, and more need to assist those already wealthy. "People need help to protect the safety of their assets," says Jean-Pierre. "People now are getting concerned about how to manage their money. They need some vision for the future."

Indonesia's situation stands in contrast to the situation in the EU, he says. With his deep expertise, Jean-Pierre has become less sanguine about the future of the EU. In the old days, he says, bankers there could make long-term plans for the clients. Now, that's all changed. "We can only structure investments now for five years, because now it is very difficult to see beyond five years, due to all the uncertainties now in the financial world. The politicians don't know where they are going," he says. "The EU cannot create growth. Why? It is completely overregulated and that stops new ideas from developing." Thus, he sees Indonesia enjoying opportunities even while challenges remain in the EU. "For our clients in the EU, we can mostly only talk about preserving their wealth in that environment. It is hard to talk about growing their wealth. Except in other economies, like here, where you still have the potential," he says. **F**